

THE SPIRITUAL ISSUES OF THE WAR

This bulletin is published for readers at home and abroad by the Religions Division of the Ministry of Information, London, to elucidate the spiritual issues at stake in the war, and to provide information concerning the British Churches in wartime, as well as their contribution to post-war reconstruction.

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DUTCH CHURCH AND THE POST-WAR ERA

A special number of *Vrij Nederland*, one of the most influential of the "underground papers" in Holland, is devoted to post-war reconstruction. The issue contains an article on the Church in the post-war era, from which we quote the following:—

"It is high time that wider circles than hitherto should give attention to the question of the task and attitude of the Church after the liberation of our country. The present period in which so much Church work has come to a standstill and discussions in meetings and in the Press are made impossible must not remain without fruit and should be considered as a precious opportunity of preparation for the future.

"It will be most necessary that the Churches show readiness to revise thoroughly their attitude and their conception of their task. It would be tragic if the weaknesses and sins which were a burden to very many people, should reappear without change. One should not demand of the Churches that they should modify their message, for they are conscious that they have received this from God. But the Church will have to show that it has learned something from these terrible years, and it will have to show the courage, the energy and the humility to translate this insight into action.

"During these last years the Churches have learned the importance of common consultation through which unity and common action is demonstrated to the extent to which this is possible in the present situation of disunited Christendom. We must not cherish the illusion that after the war the differences between the Churches will suddenly disappear. Moreover, to desire the unity of the Church as a factor of the growing and desir-

able national unity is a dangerous attitude for the Church. Church unity must be based on motives which are rooted in the nature of the Church. But each Church has the obligation to demonstrate this unity as much as possible.

"These years have shown the significance of common consultation. What nobody considered possible has happened! The Roman and practically all Protestant Churches have found each other at the decisive moment. Again and again they have drawn up their protests together or proclaimed their messages to the authorities or the people after previous consultation with each other. This is an important indication for the future. The Churches must locally and nationally get accustomed to this collaboration. The time of living apart from each other must irrevocably belong to the past. The need of our time must force the Churches to give up their isolation.

"At the same time the Churches have learned in the distress of these years that they must be *speaking Churches*. The strength of the Churches is in the Word which they have to speak, not in the political power which they may gain through organisation. The Churches have discovered with surprise that our people listen gratefully and attentively when they speak in obedience to the Gospel. In spite of shortcomings, the moments when the Churches have proclaimed the Commandments of their Lord, in His name and for the sake of the people, when they took the defence of justice, mercy and freedom, and when they protested against the violation of these by the occupying power, have been unforgettable moments.

"When the occupation is over, the

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Churches will also have to support, to lead, to warn the nation by speaking publicly and as much as possible by speaking together. A democratic government which is our own government can also sin against the claims of justice and mercy. In that case also the Churches will have to show courage. Tremendous needs will appear when the time of occupation is over: destruction, terror and chaos, about which the Churches may not remain silent. The de-Christianised masses, the disintegration of the family, the uprooting of youth and many other temptations and dangers will make it necessary for the Churches to raise a warning voice.

"The Churches will need a deep insight into their vocation with regard to the whole life of the nation. One of the many miracles of these years is the discovery made by so many that the Church is the conscience of the nation."—*I.C.P.I.S., Geneva.*

"FOUR FREEDOMS—ATLANTIC AND CHRISTIAN"

Canon F. B. Macnutt of Canterbury Cathedral has published a small booklet (obtainable from S.P.C.K., 1s. 6d.) with the above title. It contains an original discussion of the Four Freedoms—Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Want and Freedom from Fear—mentioned by President Roosevelt in his Message to Congress on January 6th, 1941. Canon Macnutt develops each of these subjects, taking them in the reverse order, and shows how in each case they grow out of, and are most fully guaranteed by, Christian principles.

He quotes an especially interesting historical incident particularly connected with Canterbury Cathedral in his discussion of Freedom of Speech. We quote this passage, with the author's permission.

"Canterbury Cathedral stands upon the site of the church where the first Archbishop of Canterbury 'set up his stool and established his see'; and looking back into that remote past, it is of immense interest to read the answer of the Kentish King Ethelbert to Augustine and his companions, who had just landed at Ebbsfleet, and had been allowed by the King to explain the object of their mission. As Dean Stanley says, these words really 'do seem to contain the seeds of all that is excellent in English character . . . exactly what, under the influence of Christianity, has grown up into all our best institutions.' I take the passage from Bede's His-

tory: 'Your words and promises are very fair, but as they are new to us and doubtful, I cannot approve of them so far as to forsake that which I have so long observed with the whole English nation. But because you have come hither from a long distance, and as I conceive that you desire to impart to us what you yourselves believe to be true and most beneficial, we will not molest you, but will give you hospitality and take care to supply you with all that is needed for your support; nor do we forbid you to preach and gain as many as you can to your religion.'

"There at the fountain head of its story is the spirit that in spite of many vicissitudes has animated our race through the centuries. Again and again it has overthrown tyranny within and without. It was this that drove across the Atlantic those British sons of freedom who preferred exile in another land to Stuart religious oppression. They became the forebears of those who in the eighteenth century in their War of Independence rebelled and broke away from the exactions of George III and his Ministers; and also of those who in a still later age under Lincoln united themselves with their parent nation across the ocean in banishing slavery from their borders for all time. It is a kindred spirit in both nations which unites them now in this War of Freedom, and brought together their leaders in mid-ocean to produce the Atlantic Charter, which has since been largely accepted by their two peoples, as well as by the independent nations of the British Commonwealth, by Soviet Russia, and by the exiled representatives in London of many oppressed European countries."

THE BISHOP OF TINNEVELLY WITH INDIAN CHRISTIAN TROOPS

The following extract from a letter by the Bishop of Tinnevely (the Rt. Rev. Stephen Neill) describes a visit paid by him to Christian troops from South India serving in the Punjab. We print some extracts from the letter:—

"One of my purposes in coming so far north was to see something of the South Indian Christian troops in the cantonments in the Punjab. Knowing of this desire, the Bishop had arranged for a service in the cantonment church on Palm Sunday afternoon. These men are very far from home, and rather forlorn. Though the officers and chaplains do as much as they can for them, language is a serious barrier, and the sight of anyone who comes from their own part of

the world is in itself a great encouragement. It is difficult to estimate how many we had, as men were coming in all through the service, but we reckon that it cannot have been much less than 400 men, speaking at least seven different languages. I took the service in a mixture of Tamil and Malayalam, and preached in Tamil. We reckoned that probably sixty per cent. of the men would have been able to understand most of what was going on. After the service there was a tea party, and the Bishop of Lahore and I moved round and made friends with as many as we could.

"On Easter Eve the colonel in charge of the recruits remarked that some of the South Indian recruits had asked for a Good Friday service, so he had given them a barrack room, and they had had a three hours' service on their own. This seemed to be a very remarkable statement. . . I suggested that I might go out with him on Sunday afternoon and investigate, and this was arranged. I found that the facts were as stated: One of the Telugu recruits is a lay reader of the Canadian Baptist Mission; he had gathered together all the Telugus, and had given them a full service, with addresses on the Seven Words. We found about 130 men gathered to meet us in the barrack room. Of these a large number were Roman Catholics. There were perhaps thirty Tamils, forty Telugus, forty Malayalees, and a sprinkling of other languages. The commanding officer is fully in sympathy; he has agreed to make the room available every Sunday, and has accepted my suggestion that a Church committee should be formed among the men, one representative for each language, to arrange the service. I have promised to see that they get what books they need. It is most encouraging to find the men so keen on their religion in circumstances which are not too easy for them. The commanding officer, apart from being himself a religious man, is quite shrewd enough to realise that anything which seems to the men like a part of home is exceedingly good for morale, and helps them to settle down and be happy, instead of brooding and getting unhappy and discontented. The son of one of our clergy is doing splendid work in Ambala cantonment. He writes that they have three men ready for Baptism and four for Confirmation. We ought to send some South Indian chaplains up to these parts; and I hope that in each place it may be possible to find a man capable of holding a lay reader's licence and working with the chaplains, who are keen to help but cannot overcome the difficulty of language."

METROPOLITAN OF KIEV ON ANGLO-RUSSIAN CHURCH RELATIONS

Nikolai, Metropolitan of Kiev, writes as follows in *Soviet War News*:—

"The Archbishop of York's recent visit to Moscow was an outstanding event for the Russian Orthodox Church. It was not only a demonstration of friendship between the English and Russian peoples; it was also a clear expression of the sympathy of the Church of England, and of its feelings of brotherhood towards us.

"The friendly relations between these two Churches have their own history, about which I should like to write a little.

"The rapprochement of the two Churches was to a considerable extent due to Birkbeck, that enlightened Englishman, who paid frequent visits to Russia during the second half of the last century, first with the special object of studying the structure, life and form of service of the Orthodox Church, and then, in his own words, in order to take part in the prayers of the Orthodox Church festivals, particularly during Passion Week and Easter. Russian churchmen of the time called him 'the friend of the Orthodox Church.' On his return to England after each of these visits Birkbeck, in lectures and books, acquainted members of the Church of England with what he had learned of the Russian Orthodox Church.

"In 1897 Archbishop Antony (Vadovsky) of Finland, afterwards Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, visited England as the representative of the Russian Orthodox Church. The representatives of the Church of England, whose guest he was, welcomed him with honour and expressions of brotherhood. He celebrated the ceremonial of the Orthodox Church in London. The service was attended by many English churchmen. It was said that after his visit to England, and after the English churchmen had made a closer study of the Orthodox Church service, the Russian Orthodox Prayer for the Dead was introduced into the Church of England Order of Common Prayer. (We think the Metropolitan has in mind the insertion of the Russian *Contakion for the Departed in The English Hymnal*.—Ed.) Oxford University bestowed an honorary degree on Archbishop Antony.

Thirty Years Ago

"Before the First World War of 1914-18, four bishops of the Church of England visited Russia as guests of the Russian Ortho-

dox Church. They visited St. Petersburg and Moscow, attended many Church services, and were welcomed in a friendly and brotherly way by the Russian churchmen. When they visited St. Petersburg Ecclesiastical Academy, at which I was then a student, I welcomed the guests in the name of the whole student body, expressing in my speech our pleasure at such a manifestation of friendship between the two Churches.

"For a number of years before the war of 1914-18 a committee for the rapprochement of the Church of England and the Russian Orthodox Church was working at St. Petersburg, studying the faiths and forms of service. During the last years of its existence the committee was headed by Archbishop Sergii of Finland, now Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia. The war, and later difficulties in maintaining connections with the Church of England, caused the committee to leave its work unfinished.

"The present war against the evil forces of Hitlerism has shown the two Churches' complete community of attitude to the brutal common foe. This community of feeling unites our Churches in sacred wrath. We have a common belief in the ultimate triumph of light and truth over the darkness and abomination of Nazi banditry. Metropolitan Sergii's message to his flock and the Archbishop of Canterbury's message to the Church of England are very similar in content and purposefulness. The exchange of messages between the heads of our Churches has raised to greater heights the friendly relation between our two Churches.

The Archbishop of York's Visit

"On the invitation of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Archbishop of York, an important representative of the Church of England, visited Moscow accompanied by two ministers from London. The Archbishop of York talked with the Patriarch Sergii and was twice present at services conducted by the Patriarch in Bogoyavlensky Cathedral, Moscow.

"He spoke of the sympathy and friendship between the Russian and English peoples and between the Churches of England and Russia; he spoke of the deep feelings which the English people have for the Russian people in the trials caused by the bloody war, and of the prayers of the English Church for victory over the common foe.

"The Patriarch Sergii assured the Archbishop of York of the brotherly regard of the Russian Church for the Church of Eng-

land. The Russian churchgoers who filled the Bogoyavlensky Cathedral expressed their cordiality and respect for the envoy of the Church of England.

Deepened Friendship

"I, who thirty years ago, during my student days at St. Petersburg, welcomed the English bishops, again had good fortune: I was the first to greet the Archbishop at the airport on his arrival in our capital.

"The Archbishop of York's visit to Moscow will no doubt do much towards deepening and strengthening the friendship between the two Churches.

"The proposed return visit to England by a delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church will serve to bring the two Churches still closer together.

"Our Orthodox Church constantly prays the Lord for just, severe judgment over Hitler and his associates. This judgment will be the triumph of justice over the abomination of Hitlerism. Only when the light triumphs over darkness, and the aggressors' military forces suffer defeat, will human progress be possible. This triumph will also be the triumph of Christian principles over the anti-Christian forces of Fascism. Let the blessed hour of victory come soon, and through the cross of great trials and heroic deeds let there come a resurrection of the principles of justice, peace and love trampled down by Fascism."

A TRAGIC LOSS TO AMERICAN AND BRITISH CHURCHES

The work of British and American Churches for European reconstruction has suffered a severe blow by the death of the Rev. Dr. T. C. Hume, who was killed when the Swedish aeroplane in which he was travelling to Sweden was shot down last Friday night. Dr. Hume was going to Sweden to take up a post under the World Council of Churches in connection with European reconstruction. He was the chosen delegate of the Churches of America, and during his stay in Britain he had been in touch with many British Church leaders. He attended the British Council of Churches, and his contributions to the discussions were marked by their sanity and relevance. His death under such tragic circumstances is deeply regretted in British Church circles. Two prominent American Churchmen, Bishop Leonard and Dr. Hume, have now lost their lives in the hazards of wartime air travel.